

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 221723
ORIGIN NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ONY-00 /011 R

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O 311850Z AUG 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 221723

STADIS////////////////////
FOR CHARGE KINSOLVING FROM DRAPER

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2

TAGS: MOPS, PINR, LE, SY

SUBJECT: LEBANON'S SYRIAN PRESENCE

REF: BEIRUT 5044

1. WE VERY MUCH APPRECIATE YOUR THOUGHTFUL SUGGESTION AND DO NOT WANT TO DISCOURAGE YOU FROM MAKING OTHERS. AS WE SEE IT, HOWEVER, ANY SHARING WITH THE SYRIANS OF OUR ASSESSMENTS OR ESTIMATES WOULD OPEN UP PANDORA'S BOX. SEELYE HAS FULL AUTHORITY TO DAMPEN DOWN SYRIAN INTERESTS IN ANY MAJOR MOVES IN BEIRUT ON GROUNDS OTHER THAN IT WOULD CAUSE HEAVY SYRIAN CASUALTIES. THE REAL STAKES, IN ADDITION TO THE PURELY HUMANITARIAN ONES, ARE IN THE RISKS OF A SYRIAN-ISRAELI WAR.

2. IF WE WERE SUCCESSFUL IN DETERRING THE SYRIANS FROM A
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MOVE IN BEIRUT, THEY MIGHT TURN TO A STRATEGY WHICH WOULD BE FAR MORE DANGEROUS AND PROBABLY A LOT MORE EFFECTIVE. I WONDER WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF THE SYRIANS STARTED SHELLING JUNIYAH.

3. PLEASE ALSO BEAR IN MIND THAT PARKER, EMBASSY BEIRUT, AND SEVERAL OF US IN THE DEPARTMENT HAVE BEEN EXPLICITLY

ACCUSED OF HAVING GIVEN THE GREEN LIGHT TO THE SYRIANS,
OR TURNED A BLIND EYE TO SYRIAN ACTIONS, OR HAVE BEEN
UTTERLY CALLOUS. THIS IS WHAT WE MEANT WHEN WE SAID
THAT MISUNDERSTANDINGS ABOUT U.S. MOTIVES COULD OCCUR IN
SEVERAL QUARTERS. VANCE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: TROOP DEPLOYMENT, INTELLIGENCE ASSESSMENTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 31 aug 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978STATE221723
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: MDRAPER:CF
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X2
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780356-0506
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t1978082/aaaaabth.tel
Line Count: 68
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 7f35f25a-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN NEA
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: ONLY, STADIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: ONLY, STADIS
Reference: 78 BEIRUT 5044
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 14 jul 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1610773
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: LEBANON'S SYRIAN PRESENCE
TAGS: MOPS, PINR, LE, SY
To: BEIRUT
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/7f35f25a-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014